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Gloucester

Gloucester RFC official matchday programme 2001-2002

vs NEC Harlequins

Saturday 13th October 2001 kick-off 3.00pm

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Welcome from **Pete Glanville** [Team Manager]

As a former player and now Team Manager I cannot tell you what it means to have such passionate support from you the fans no matter where we are in the world. However, supporters must realise that, like the players, they are representing the City of Gloucester whenever they are supporting us.

However, supporters must realise that, like the players, they are representing the City of Gloucester whenever they are supporting us.

It has been brought to my attention in the playing department that there has been some over robust behaviour by a minority of our

fans in recent weeks. Whilst we appreciate and value all home and away support that we get week after week, we cannot condone such behaviour and we ask of this minority to stop and think what they are doing before they act! Should players step out of line, they are dealt with accordingly and I hope that the rest of our

supporters, if witnessing such behaviour, would bring it to the attention of club officials so that they too can be dealt with accordingly.

Our support is the envy of every club in the league and as such we are often singled out for criticism. Whilst much of this may be unjust, it is a small

minority of offenders who, by taking things a step too far, give these critics an easy target.

Please continue to support the team in a way we can be proud of.

Pete Glanville
Team Manager

By becoming a GRFC Season Ticket Holder
you have become a member of

The GRFC Ticket Holders Association

is holding its
Inaugural Annual General Meeting
On

Wednesday 24th October at 7:00pm.

Venue: Woodlawns Country Club, Green Street, Brockworth, Gloucester.

This is your chance to meet the players and the
management of Gloucester Rugby Club.

All Season Ticket Holders are invited to the AGM but
entry will only be permitted on the showing of your Season Ticket.

Director of Rugby

[Philippe Saint-André]

"They are in the Heineken Cup and had to play a very hard game last weekend."

I think last weekend's game away at Parma was a very good and very serious performance. I have the statistics to prove that everyone worked so hard. It was good to win as we did, scoring six tries and only conceding one.



This team has now won three games consecutively. We have beaten Sale away, La Rochelle and Parma away. Now though we must concentrate on what will surely be a very hard league game against Harlequins. It is important for the team, who are back at home today, to win this game and make it four consecutive wins.

The performances of the younger players over the past few games have been very encouraging. I think it is important for the future of Gloucester Rugby Club to bring through young players like Forrester, Simpson-Daniel and Goodridge. It is important that our younger players play these types of European games and learn how we play. This game today is very important.

Harlequins are a very good team

with world-class players in the squad. They are in the Heineken Cup and had to play a very hard game last weekend. It is important that we take confidence from our previous games but we must not be over confident.

I think the guys are beginning to show more confidence and play together as they get to know each other's game better. When you have twelve new guys it is always difficult. We have now played ten games together and we are beginning to play more as a unit and we are finding more solutions on the pitch.

I now look for consistency. We are sixth in the league and it will be important to win this game and the one after against London Irish, which may then put us in the top four. We must though respect Harlequins, they

are a dangerous team and we know they can play very well. We must try to remember the way we played at Sale, and do this again especially in front of 'The Shed'.

Against Sale I thought this was the first time we had played for the full eighty minutes. We played well in the first half against Leicester and in the second half against Saracens. Today we must play for eighty minutes again.

Against Harlequins, the intensity of the game will be much higher than against Parma. Parma have some very good players but I think that because we played with such intensity in the first thirty minutes, this made the difference. Against Harlequins we must play with this intensity for eighty minutes if we want to win.





Club Captain [Phil Vickery]

D.O.B: 14/3/1976
Position: Tight Head Prop
Height: 1.91m
Weight: 112.5kg
Former Clubs: Bude/Redruth
Honours: England,
 British Lions

"These next two games against Harlequins and away at London Irish are games we should win."

The results in the European Shield over the last two weeks have been very important because we want to do well in this competition, but the league is why we are here and what we are judged on.

Not wanting to take anything away from the European Shield or the two teams we have played against, we know that the next two games in the Premiership will make a big difference to us for the rest of the season. Especially if we want to get into the top four.

Wins in the next two fixtures will make the difference between us getting into the top four or being in the lower parts of the table, and once you are down there it's very difficult to get out.

These next two games against Harlequins, and away at London Irish, are games we should win. Without trying to take anything away from them, these are games when a big performance is not enough. Harlequins and London Irish are both very good teams with good squads of players but if we have aspirations to do well then we have got to put teams away.

After the amount of injuries we suffered last season, it was important this season for Philippe to build a strong squad of players. If you have the players here, then there is no point not using them. You have to have the confidence to use them in big games and that has been good for all of us. We showed in the last two weeks that we have got good depth in our squad. It has meant we have been a bit disjointed at some points but every one has worked hard and all want to get into the first team.

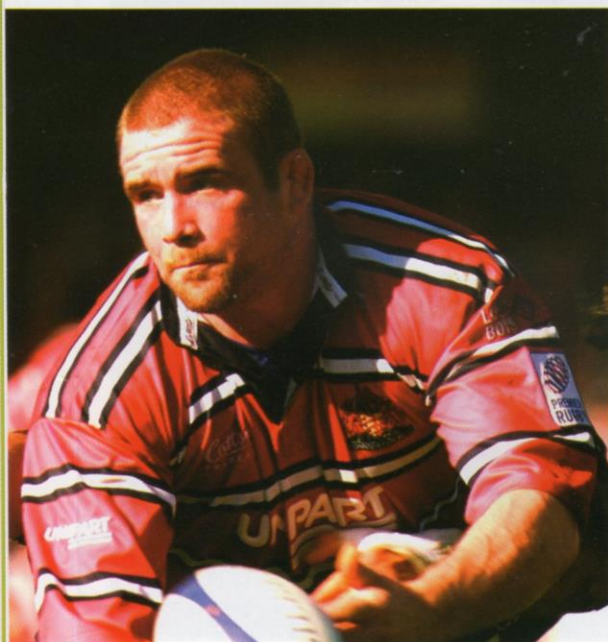
Another very pleasing aspect of this season is the progression of our younger players. Many have been given a chance and it is good to see them rising to the occasions. James Forrester is a player that has impressed me

immensely, he is a fantastic talent and is someone I believe, given the right coaching and the right opportunities can go a long way. Also players like James Simpson-Daniel, Duncan Murray and Clive Stuart-Smith, are all highly thought of and are learning all the time.

On a personal note, with an England game just around the corner, it poses a difficult problem. Playing for your country is always an honour, though I still have a lot to prove and need to get my form back.

That starts today against Harlequins. People say that you might get injured, but that is part and parcel of the game. Philippe has given me the opportunity to rest but that's not what I'm about. I want to play the game today, get a 'W' in the column and focus on England next week.

It will be noted that I will play against Jason Leonard today. He is a great player and one we all admire, but there are very few teams around now who don't have world class players in the front row and you need to get yourself up for every game. Today is no different.



The Key to Success

"Philippe's summer shopping in France emphasised his knowledge of rugby in his homeland, and his standing as a former French captain"

How many coaches do Gloucester need? You know the old gag - in the old days a coach merely transported the players to an away game. Now, the team has a forwards coach, a fitness coach, a specialist line out consultant, a defensive coach, and now in Paul Turner, a backs coach.

Oh, and Philippe steering the whole thing. A coaching committee as opposed to a selection committee or a general committee - but we've moved on a bit since then.

So what's the secret to all these men keeping their jobs and staying 1 step ahead of the sack? Clearly winning helps, but there can be all sorts of reasons for staff departures, and you do need several key attributes to succeed.

"where the buck stops," and attention to the most minute detail can make the difference between success and failure.

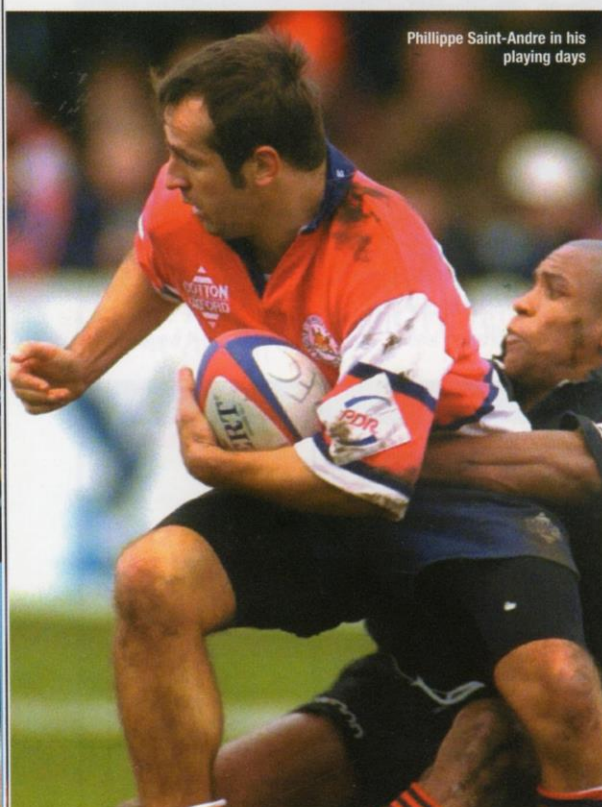
4. Contacts. Possibly the most vital aspect of all. Philippe's summer shopping in France emphasised his knowledge of rugby in his homeland, and his standing as a former French captain. He's called in several favours from French clubs, but he's been less active in signing players from other Premiership teams. It suggests his world wide network is stronger than his contacts in England.

5. Man management. The delivering of a message before a vital match, or changing the pattern of one at half time separates the ordinary coaches from the great ones. I'm not a Manchester United supporter, but one wonders what Sir Alex Ferguson said to his players at half time at Tottenham a fortnight ago, with Spurs 3-0 up. United went on to win 5-3, and the ability to handle the different characters in a team and get the best out of the mix shouldn't be underestimated.

1. Belief. In yourself and the players at your disposal, this has to be almost unshakeable. The inner confidence in your methods at every level, and the ability to take the players with you. Those that don't buy into it fall by the wayside.

2. A work ethic. Confidence and laziness in rugby management rarely go together. The hours are long and unsociable, and you're never really off duty. I shudder to think what Philippe's mobile phone bill is.

3. Organisation. You can apply this to almost any area, from line out calls to finding a match report or video in the office. Knowing how to come up with an answer to every problem thrown at you is important when YOU are



Philippe Saint-Andre in his playing days

Ludovic Mercier



6. Tactical awareness.

Few coaches will have got away without playing the game at a reasonable level, though it's surprising that some former internationals don't make the transition easily. More limited players, or those who've had stop-start careers because of injury may have actually learned more. Northampton's John Steele was highly regarded as a club player, but his career wouldn't compare in status with the likes of Dean Richards - yet here they are rubbing shoulders as coaches in the Premiership. It merely proves an astute brain CAN compensate for not playing at the highest level.

7. The will to win. Last on my list (though it's not an

exhaustive one) is the desire not to be beaten. The level of drive NOT to accept defeat even when all seems lost separates the best from the rest, and it's an attribute most supporters demand from players and management alike. The flip side is also not easing up when the match is won - a trait, sub-consciously or not, that Gloucester have been prone to in the past.

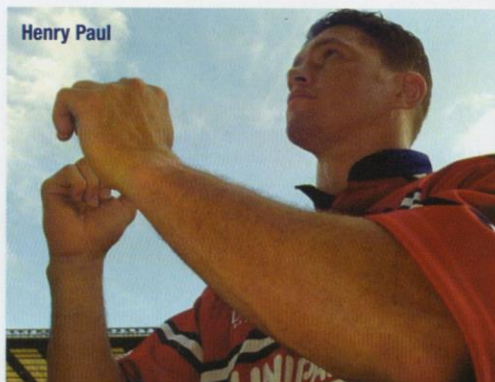
And so to this afternoon's game, which promises to be the last without Henry Paul. His Bradford Bulls commitments should see him be available for the game at London Irish next weekend, but first Gloucester will be keen to see off last season's European Shield winners.

Quins are a talented bunch, and today's prospects may well hinge on how the injury situation has developed after the trip to Parma.

C'mon Glaws !!

"It merely proves an astute brain CAN compensate for not playing at the highest level"

Henry Paul



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[from the commentary box]

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Head2Head

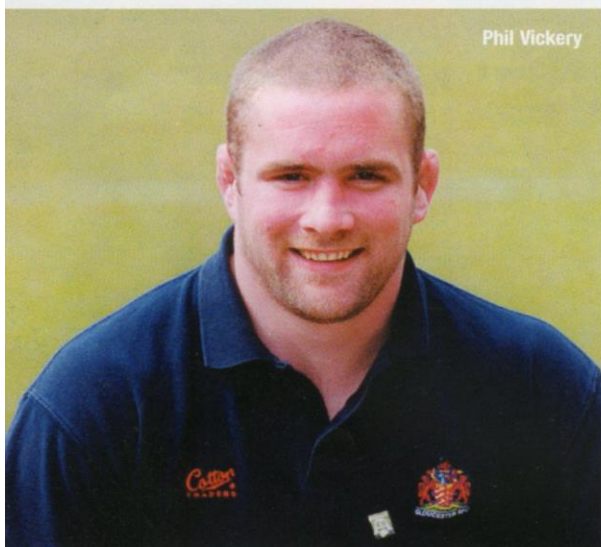
Today's Head to Head focuses on two legends of the front row. They have been team mates for their country and on the recent British Lions tour of Australia.

From Gloucester, the Raging Bull himself Phil Vickery comes under the spotlight. Phil is the new Club Captain who is widely regarded as the best

prop in Britain and from NEC Harlequins a player who seems to have been around forever, Jason Leonard.

Vickerystats

Nickname	Raging Bull
Position	Tight Head Prop
Born	14/03/76
Age	25
Height	1.91m
Weight	125kg
Club History	Bude, Redruth
Int Hons	England, Lions



Phil Vickery



Gloucester
Rugby Football Club

Phil Vickery

Strengths

For the ever-modest Vickery, this was not a question he was able to answer easily. He regards himself as the 'steady eddie' of the team, the calming influence around the squad on match days. He has probably the best hands of the current crop of international props, the pass he picked off his bootlaces for England in the Six Nations springs easily to mind. His fellow prop, close friend and former house mate Trevor Woodman said, "he's a very attacking scrummager. He also brings stability to the team, and you're always happier when he plays. Added to which he is great around the field scattering rucks and is good with the ball in hand as well".

Weaknesses

Again, Vickery has an attack of modesty and lists his whole game as something he continually works on. He hopes to be able to read the game better but believes his time as club captain will help him achieve this. He says he would like to get 'ball in hand' more often, game plan permitting. "I just want to learn all the time, learn new techniques in the scrum and have the confidence to try them".

Special interests

As the son of a farmer in Devon, one would expect Phil to enjoy the great outdoors and you wouldn't be mistaken. He says he enjoys fishing when he gets the chance, and plays skittles, once a week with fellow players in a local league. Mainly though Vickery just like to get away from the hectic life-style of a professional sportsman. "I like time to myself just to chill out. My job is fantastic but there are a lot of pressures associated with it. It's therefore nice to get away from it either at my house or walking in the country".

High Point

Understandably, Vickery lists his first cap for England and selection for the Lions tour as high points. He also includes England's recent wins in Murrayfield and France as great games he has been involved in. Adding he has never experienced anything like the games in Australia.

Low Point

The low point for Vickery came after he returned from the Lions tour when he admits to have done a lot of soul searching. "The Lions tour was a great experience but I don't like to talk about it because we lost and regardless of what anyone says we were a losing British Lion's team and that wasn't what I wanted to be".

"Vickery on Leonard"

"Jason is Jason but I don't want to follow in anyone's footsteps, I am my own player. He is a great bloke and you can't fault him. He is a perfect example to everyone. If I ever wanted to be talked about as someone, he would definitely be the man I'd want to take after and would love people to talk about me as they do Jason.

Daren O'Leary

[player focus]



This week's player spotlight focuses on another of the Gloucester new boys, ex-Quin Daren O'Leary. He faces his old club for the first time today and one gets the impression that there is slightly more than the four points at stake for him.

He bid farewell to the club he had served so well in fitting fashion crossing the line for one of the tries that eventually won Quins the European Shield final and a place in the Heineken Cup.

O'Leary lists the whole event as one of his career highlights but now focuses on a new life at Kingsholm. What Cherry and White fans would give for a repeat of O'Leary's try scoring feats at the end of this season's Shield run.

Ironically, the abundant changes in personnel have made the transition easier for O'Leary, "for me, having so many new guys coming in this year, has been a great thing. There is nothing worse than being one of the two new guys because it's harder to

integrate but get a dozen guys in and the whole squad tries to integrate". On the pitch also, the initiation period for the new winger has been a happy one.

O'Leary feels that bar two separate forty minute periods, which he puts down to teething problems, the team have begun the season well.

"We have one of the most talented squads in the country and I think people expect instant results. In my experience it doesn't happen, it takes a couple of months before things gel. People have different styles but I think we are gelling nicely. We have had two or three good performances and I'd say one and a half poor performances".

[No.11] wing

"Ironically, the abundant changes in personnel have made the transition easier for O'Leary."

"One of the best things in rugby is playing against mates, and I still have a lot in the Quins team."

Traditionally, Gloucester has never been considered a wingers club. Philippe himself was probably one of our first real wingers five seasons ago. Daren O'Leary however, says that leaving the big smoke for the West Country was one of the easiest rugby decisions he has ever made.

"My decision to leave Quins was made before my decision was made to come to Gloucester. I was looking for a club and I have four or five criteria that I like a club to fulfil in order to make them a candidate. In my opinion, Gloucester fulfilled them all".

"First of all I wanted a club with very solid foundations" says O'Leary, "and when you get 10,000 people through the gate the solidity is there and not just in numbers but a fantastic crowd". The Kingsholm crowd, it seems, played more than just a bit-part role in persuading Daren O'Leary the performer to test his wares in front of a new audience. "I've been down here on numerous occasions and it's been quite an experience. I've always wanted to see what it was like to have such a fantastic home crowd". O'Leary recounts a story of being a young eighteen year old playing

for Saracens and having one of the worst halves in his rugby career. The Saracens number eight punched the Gloucester scrum-half, and O'Leary had to play in front of an incensed 'Shed' for forty minutes, commenting he didn't get close enough to drop a couple of high balls. Conversely, he says the experience of being cheered on to the paddock and back to his position each game is one of the best experiences of his life.

O'Leary then took a long hard look at the squad and the management of the club and decided that playing alongside names such as Fanolua, Ewens, Catling, Stoica and Gomersall, would do his career no harm at all. He admits that he was a little apprehensive but that he could see no downside to his decision.

Daren O'Leary's decision to leave the club he has played almost all his rugby for was fuelled by the need to re-start his career. Having been on the fringe of the England team and having scored the winning try in a European final what more could he want? O'Leary categorises his goals in to short and long term objectives. Initially, as at any new club, he needed to show his new teammates that he was

worth having around. Once established, he then wanted the club to push for honours. The term 'sleeping giant' was used as O'Leary pledged his future to Gloucester. The result at Saracens this year was a marked improvement on last season's performance, but next year anything other than a win would leave O'Leary disappointed.

As for his international aspirations O'Leary certainly hasn't closed the book on that chapter of his life, although he says he has become much more focused in his club commitments in the period he hasn't been involved with the England set up. "I am a firm believer that if your club is doing well and you are doing well in that side, no international side will ignore you", he says philosophically. Today his focus will firmly be on his club commitments, a league game against his old club. As any sportsman knows, nothing motivates you more than a crack at your old team mates. "I'd love to say that this was just another game, a home league game that we must win. I think we know however, that this isn't the case. As soon as the fixture list came out I looked to see who our first couple of

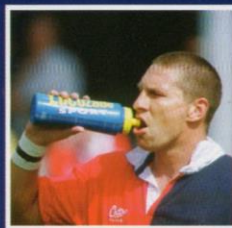
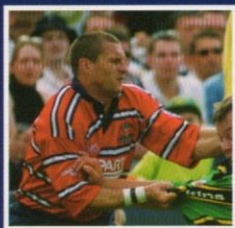
games were against and then I looked for the home game against Quins. There is no question that I have been looking forward to this game".

There is however, no malice in O'Leary's voice. His intentions are all honourable as he tells of the pleasure he will derive from playing against old friends. "One of the best things in rugby is playing against mates, and I still have a lot in the Quins team".

Since being at Kingsholm O'Leary says the players and supporters alike have welcomed him with open arms and O'Leary can't wait to play Quins with 10,000 people behind him. He has also been through some ideal scenarios about how the game will go.

"A hat trick at home would be nice" says O'Leary, "but then I do that before each game. That said, you don't spend eight years at a club without having a little extra relish about playing against them. I have a job to do though and can't afford to go over the top".

That's ok Daren - around the outside, through the middle or underneath will do just fine!





playerstats

previous club: Harlequins
representative honours: England A
height: 1.82m
weight: 91kg
position: Wing


Gloucester
Rugby Football Club

Backs Coach [Paul Turner]

Last week Paul Turner joined Gloucester to end the speculation over who would take the recently vacated position of back's coach.

"His last post was with Rugby Lions who tempted Turner the player, out of a four-year retirement."

Turner takes his place in a management structure that Managing Director Ken Nottage, believes "Will get the full potential out of the players". It will also leave Philippe Saint-Andre more time to concentrate on the short and long term strategy of the club.

Paul Turner began his rugby career at Newbridge in 1979, he also played for Newport before climbing the first rung of the coaching ladder at Sale, whom he joined as player-coach in 1991-92. He won promotion with the Manchester club in only

his second season. He has also worked at Bedford, but had to leave the club as it experienced dire financial troubles and then at Saracens although this was not the rosiest of partnerships.

His last post was with Rugby Lions who tempted 'Turner the player', out of a four-year retirement. He helped them achieve promotion to the first division by winning the necessary twelve games after Christmas.

"I owe them a lot", says Turner "It was a real wrench to leave but I came with their blessing because they realised that I have been in the Premiership and was so very much attracted by the lure of it".

The lure of the Premiership and the need to test himself at the top level are the reasons Turner gives for his move to Kingsholm. His last excursion in the top flight with Saracens got off to a bad start and didn't improve although, Turner says he still has great respect for Nigel Wray, the owner of Saracens.

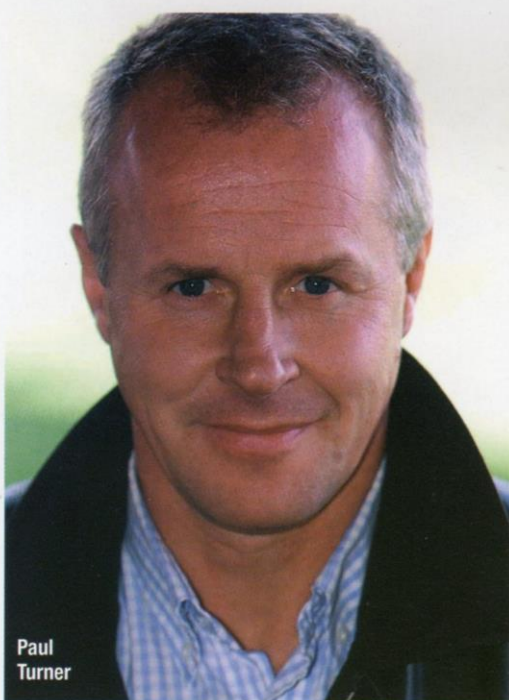
Turner wasted no time in expressing his views as he watched his new charges for the first time. In the mud at Oxtalls School, Turner, wearing rather light coloured slacks, spread-eagled himself on top of a ball as he and Philippe discussed ball retention in a tackle. "In the rain,

with my civvies clothes on, we discussed things and we will try and put things into practice. Basically I think we are on the same wavelength which is a good start", said Turner of his new boss. His ability to communicate with his colleagues and formulate the necessary chemistry off the pitch is vital for Gloucester's success on it this season.

"If I don't understand what Philippe wants", says Turner, "I will ask. I think I am here to help him. He has told me he had thought about the position and that I was the person he wanted. It will be a challenge but we have to work as a team. There will be low points but it's all about sticking together".

Turner is also very excited about the prospect of working in such a strong rugby community. "There is a great rugby community here and it is worth ten points for the home team" enthused Turner. "Away teams that come here are ten points down from the beginning. I am just glad to be part of it, rather than against it".

As an ex-international fly half Turner will bring invaluable knowledge and experience to the coaching team. His work with the key decision makers may give Gloucester the extra dimension in attack.



Paul
Turner

Paul Turner at Kingsholm with
Philippe Saint-André



"The game hasn't changed that much in fifty years. Numbers nine and ten are still very important," says Turner. "I just feel I can add something to the jigsaw here. I was very flattered when Philippe phoned me and I feel I can contribute something to help the players".

And when the puzzle is complete, Turner is confident the finished piece will be capable of bringing home the silverware all supporters crave.

"You have got to have a goal. I obviously think the club are capable as otherwise I wouldn't have come. There is no reason why an injury free Gloucester side can't challenge on all fronts and possibly bring home a trophy".

In his playing days Turner was famous for his desire to play quick, expansive rugby.

Not necessarily in the mould of

old style Gloucester, but certainly a game plan that will keep fans interested.

Turner's first involvement with the team came in the week leading up to the G.R.A.N Parma match. He says that the weekend away with the team was very useful. It gave him the chance to learn more about how the team play and the strengths and weaknesses of the squad as a whole.

He gives a very fair account of the weekend's performance and one gets the impression his honesty will adhere him to the squad.

"It was a good first half performance in Parma, although we lost our shape a bit after the break. We relaxed a bit in parts and possibly some of our players were perhaps trying too hard. We made a lot of mistakes and lost our shape. The referee got a bit pedantic and this allowed Parma

to get back into the game".

This weekend the Shield is forgotten and it is all about the Zurich Premiership and earning the all-important points. Turner concedes that Kingsholm may not be the happiest of places for the Quins but that the squad will have to put a full eighty-minute performance together if they are to win the spoils.

Turner hopes that his own personality and influence will become apparent almost within the first few training sessions. Being a fly-half he has paid particular attention to the skills of Ludovic Mercier, whom he rates as an exceptional player and the team's kicking game which he hopes to improve. "You can't always get players to play how you want to play. We have a very good fly-half here who just needs to keep playing the way he is. I see no need to change what already works but there were a

"Turner's first involvement with the team came in the week leading up to the G.R.A.N Parma match."

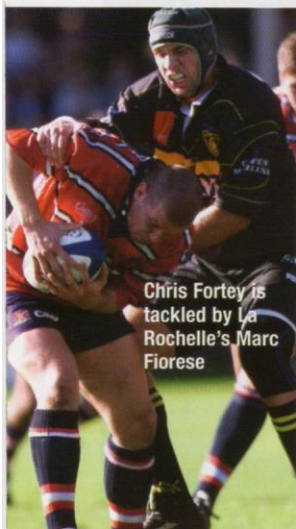
few things I would have changed at the weekend. I don't want to be a negative coach but some of our field positioning kicks need working on.

We have got certain things right and it would be foolish to change those. Philippe and I continually talk about the depth of the backs and the angles they run and that is really where I see my input".

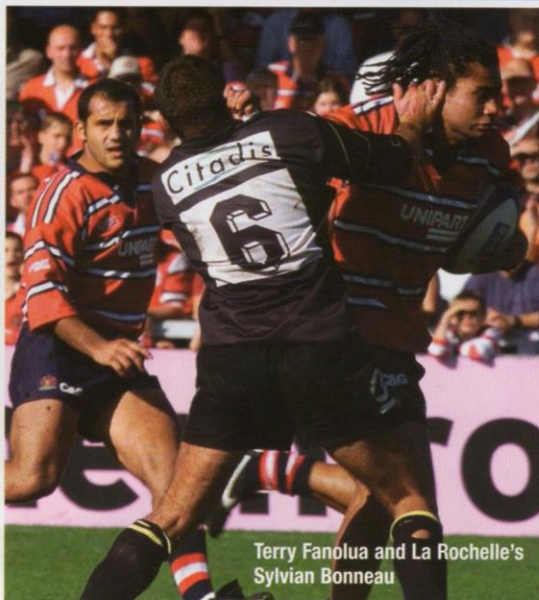
Turner finishes his analysis of his new position very simply saying, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". Wise words.

Match Action vs La Rochelle

Parker Pen Shield
29-10-01



Chris Fortey is tackled by La Rochelle's Marc Fiorese



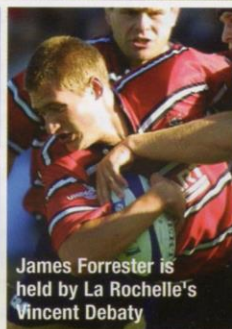
Terry Fanolua and La Rochelle's Sylvian Bonneau



Junior Paramore on his way to score a try during the first half



Joe Ewens goes over to score a try during the second half



James Forrester is held by La Rochelle's Vincent Debaty

Photography Supplied by GPA

matchstats



34 Gloucester: **34 points**
Tries: Ewens, Fortey, Paramore
Conversions: Mercier (2)
Penalties: Mercier (4)



15 La Rochelle: **15 points**
Tries: Albinet, Todeschini.
Conversions: Todeschini (1)
Penalties: Todeschini (1)

Parker Pen Shield



Robert Todd breaks through La Rochelle's defence

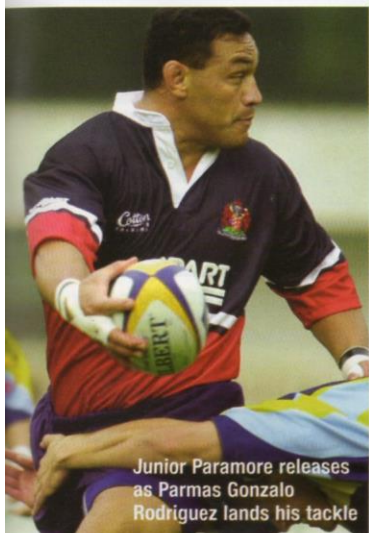
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[match action]

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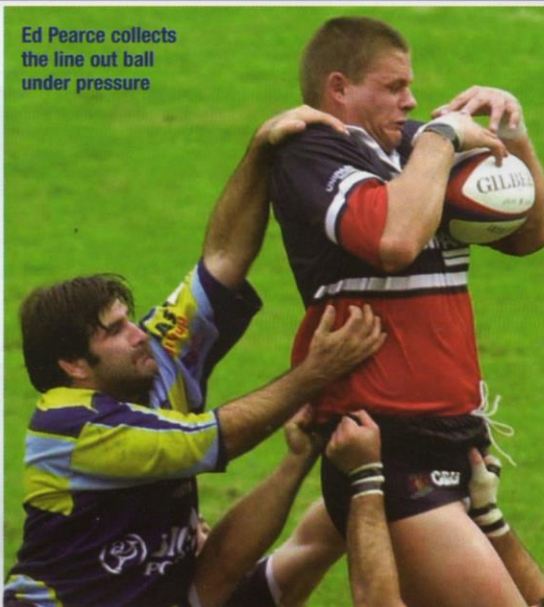
Match Action vs Gran Parma

Parker Pen Shield
06.10.01



Junior Paramore releases
as Parmas Gonzalo
Rodriguez lands his tackle

Ed Pearce collects
the line out ball
under pressure

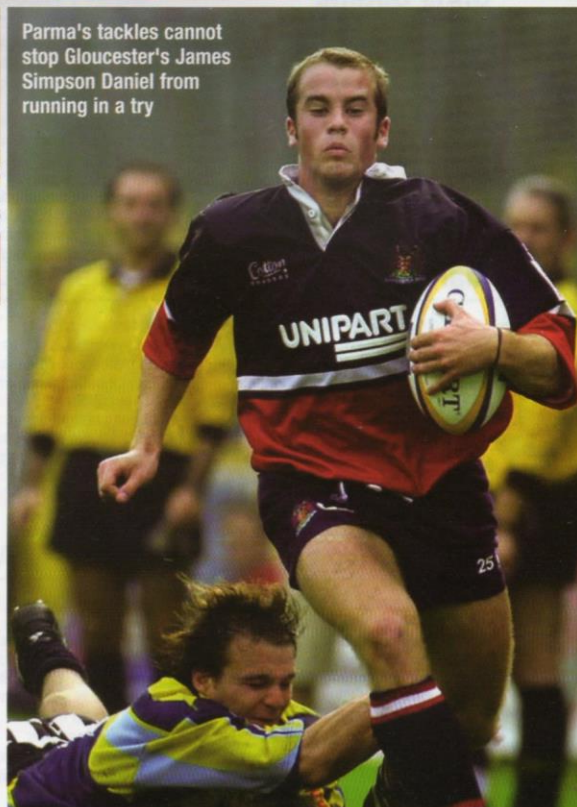


Joe Ewens evades
Parma's tackles



Robert Todd
bursts through

Parma's tackles cannot
stop Gloucester's James
Simpson Daniel from
running in a try



Photography Supplied by Ben Duffy @SWPIX.com

matchstats



5

G.R.A.N. Parma: **5 points**

Tries: Stead

Conversions: 0

Penalties: 0



48

Gloucester: **48 points**

Tries: Stoica (1) Azam (1)

Forrester (2)

Simpson-Daniel (2)

Conversions: Mercier (4) G'sall (2)

Penalties: Mercier (2)

Parker Pen Shield

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[match action]

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Peter Arnold

[contributor]

NOT MUCH EVIDENCE

It was gratifying to see the lads run in ten tries and score over 80 points in the first two matches of our European Shield campaign.

"It's like mayonnaise. It takes time to make good mayonnaise!"

Gratifying, and perhaps a little surprising, given the advance publicity which we received about the toughness and resilience of the La Rochelle outfit. Of course, it might be a bit different over on their own patch, but there's plenty of time to worry about that.

GR.A.N.Parma couldn't be taken as a foregone conclusion, either. There wasn't any real chance we would lose down there, even with a weakened team, but Italian sides are notoriously more difficult to beat on their own pitches, and the 'other' Parma side had spectacularly demolished Leeds only the previous week.

All very satisfactory as I say, but it doesn't give us much evidence on which to base any

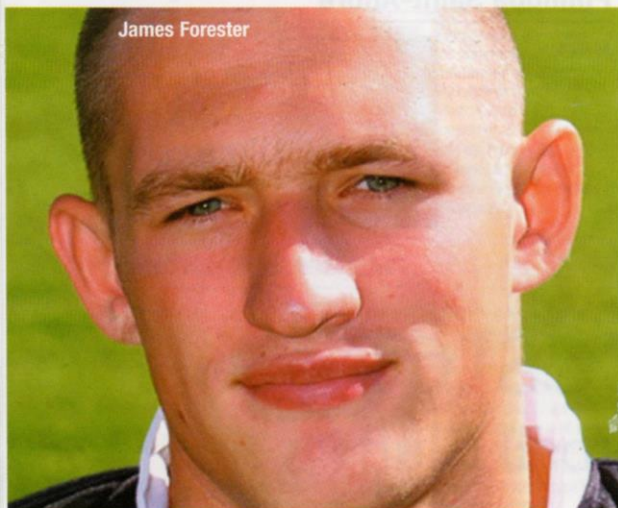
judgements on the likely outcome of today's game. True, Harlequins haven't done as well as we have on their European adventure, but they are playing in a much tougher competition. We have to fall back on what we always knew about the Quins. They are a formidable outfit with a high proportion of really good players, and they have an excellent record at Kingsholm. They are also among Gloucester's oldest opponents, with fixtures going back before 1900, so they're most welcome here for that fact alone. With the greatest of respect to our recent French and Italian opposition, you can't compare the quality of their rugby with the challenge we are likely to face today. However, there is one factor which applies equally whether you're playing Harlequins, GR.A.N.Parma or Old Rottinghamians Extra 3rds, of hallowed memory (Remember Michael Green's classic 'Art of Coarse Rugby' ? It's a book which can still make me laugh out loud, even after all these years.)

It doesn't matter who the opposition is, or however good they are, you're always likely to come away from a rugby match with a few injuries. For the last two seasons we've suffered more than we might have done in this respect. And the damage, during both years, almost seems to have been targeted to where it would hurt us most.

Last season, we had prop forwards dropping like flies. This season, while we've suffered the occasional front-row injury, the fates have decimated the back row. Andy Hazell, Jake Boer - I don't have to spell them out for you. And the loss of Steve Ojomoh and Kingsley Jones over the close season hasn't helped either. There are times when I begin to think that Someone Up There doesn't like us very much.

There's a silver lining to that particular cloud, however. The absence of the 'regulars' does mean that other people have had a chance to show us what they're made of. It was fascinating to see Olivier Azam being transformed, albeit briefly, from a hooker with attitude into a number 8 with attitude, for example, but I'd like to send my own, personal, congratulations to young James Forester. He's grabbed his chance with both capacious hands, been here, there and everywhere, and showed a turn of speed that some centres would envy. He even grabbed two tries for himself down in Italy.

I had almost written that he's 'one for the future', but personally, I'd have no qualms about throwing him into the action right now, whoever the opposition. If he can steer clear of injuries, that is.



James Forester

The future is Academic

"Last year, the Gloucester Rugby Club Academy enjoyed its inaugural year and at the end of the season, eight players from the Academy were offered full time contracts by the club."

These days, rugby players are getting younger. They are starting their professional careers whilst still regarded as schoolboys and, in the case of players such as Leicester's Lewis Moody, are veterans of over one hundred games by the age of twenty-three.

A strong youth development policy is therefore regarded as the way forward. Like Manchester United, who have for years seen the value in harvesting their own home grown talents, the future is more certain when you build from within.

Whilst the transfer fees and player's wage demands are nowhere near as great in Rugby as they are in the football world, the old adage that home grown is cheaper still stands. This is particularly the case for a club like Gloucester. There was a time when foreign players were regarded as those who came

from the wrong side of the A40 in Cheltenham. Times have changed at Kingsholm as the need to be on a par with other clubs in the league has forced the club to look further afield to remain competitive. However, the club are starting to reap the benefits of their own youth development policy. And blending the talents of the younger players with those more internationally experienced.

Last year, the Gloucester Rugby Club Academy enjoyed its inaugural year and at the end of the season, eight players from the Academy were offered full time contracts by the club. The Academy was set up to enable players to reach a sufficient calibre and step up to first team level in the event of injury or indeed push for automatic selection.

After the terrible injury crisis the club endured last season, the benefits of such a programme have been visible very early on. This year with injuries to Jake Boer, Andy Hazell, Simon Mannix and Chris Catling for the game in Parma, Philippe Saint Andre had no hesitation in calling for James Simpson-Daniel, Jon Goodridge and James Forrester.

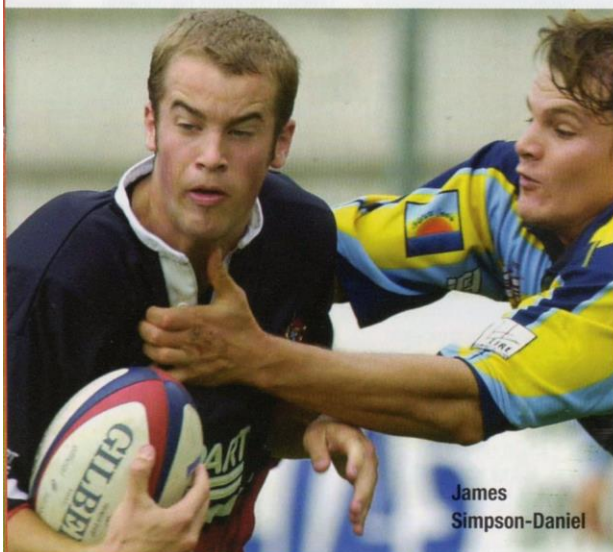
Already, Simpson-Daniel is

becoming a household name. He was fast tracked from England U18's to the Gloucester first team in little under a season, scoring a sensational fifty metre try on debut against Rotherham. During the summer there was mounting speculation that Gloucester may lose their uncut diamond to Bristol. The truth according to Simpson-Daniel is less news worthy.

"I spoke to Bristol out of courtesy really. My brother, (Chris) is there so I was interested to hear what they had to say but never actually met them myself, my agent dealt with it".

This sort of pressure at such a young age may have forced some players into their shell, Simpson-Daniel however, has come back with a new Gloucester contract fitter and stronger.

"You do feel the pressure. I have a first team contract now and so I am expected to perform at a high level all the time. Although I have come from the Academy and would play for them again if needed. I am a first team player and Philippe has told me that that is how he will treat me. With that comes expectations but it's the same for any player".



**James
Simpson-Daniel**

Forrester made his first team debut away against London Irish last year. On the day he showed another useful talent of being in the right place at the right time by scoring under the posts.

Simpson-Daniel was always considered a fly-half through his school boy days until at England U18 group he came up against Bath protégé Olly Berkley. Berkley has since represented the full England team but at the time retained the U18 number ten jersey after Simpson-Daniel showed his versatility at centre.

"It's good to have two ball players in the team and it just goes to show how thin the line is", said Simpson-Daniel of playing with his Bath counterpart and his meteoric rise. Philippe has expounded the virtues of players being able to play in more than one position in a team. This gives flexibility to the squad. One player who has shown a surprising versatility for such a young age is James Forrester.

Forrester made his first team debut away against London Irish last year. On the day he showed another useful talent of being in the right place at the right time by scoring under the posts. He has also earned rave reviews from Phil Vickery who has described James's contribution as fantastic. He has also continued he try scoring feats whilst "just following the play", bagging a brace against Parma. "I really enjoyed the Parma game" says Forrester, "they weren't the highest level of opposition I have played against but the game was played at a fast pace and they were obviously up for it", he added, "Obviously scoring in the first minute helped me settle in". Forrester

has played on both flanks, deputising for both Jake Boer and Andy Hazel, two players along with Junior Paramore who he says have helped his game a lot this year.

"Jake and JP have given me a lot of advice about where to be and how to play. I also spoke to Hazel about playing at seven before Parma and he was very helpful". Forrester also reserves special praise for the Academy forwards coach, Andy Stanley, who he says did a lot for his game last year, spending a lot of time on a one-to-one basis. The third member of this Academy trio who is slowly making his mark is Jon Goodridge. He is another player with many strings to his positional bow. He began his career as a fly half but has found that his pace and counter attacking ability make him ideal for the back three positions.

He describes himself as over-the-moon at being rewarded with a new contract and says that putting professional sportsman as his occupation is equally as nice. Like James Forrester, Jon combines professional rugby with a university degree and he concedes that the money comes in very useful.

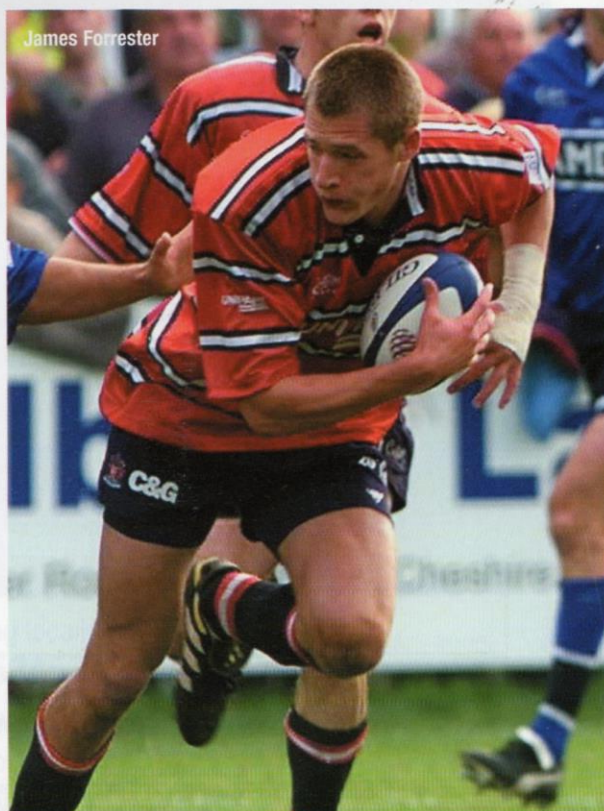
Unlike his fellow Academy Graduates, Goodridge is yet to get on the score sheet for the first team. His closest effort came as he was hauled down five metres short after running the length of the pitch against Parma.

"I heard the crowd getting excited and guessed someone was chasing me, to be honest I was hoping no-one would. It was upsetting to be caught so close, I was annoyed but we still scored".

Ironically, James Forrester profited from his mates bad luck. As Andy Gomarsall collected the subsequent stab into touch from the Parma full back, no doubt fatigued after chasing his opposite number, he span the ball infield to the lone figure of the Gloucester open side flanker who cantered in, under the posts. Goodridge

made his first team debut against London Wasps in the Championship playoff game last season. That day he sat between Jason Little and Ian Jones in the changing rooms and the two legends congratulated him on his selection. "It was just brilliant to be involved and playing with players like that", says Goodridge

Playing with international superstars is only a dream for many young players, but who knows, in ten years time another new starlet may say the same about our home grown legends.





Gloucester VS NEC Harlequins

<input type="checkbox"/>	Chris Catling	15	Mark Mapletoft	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Daren O'Leary	14	Matt Moore	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Joe Ewens	13	Will Greenwood	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Todd	12	Nick Greenstock	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	Diego Albanese	11	Dan Luger	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ludovic Mercier	10	Paul Burke	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	Andy Gomarsall	9	Scott Bemand	<input type="checkbox"/>
i c	Phil Vickery	1	Jason Leonard	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	Olivier Azam	2	Jonny Roddam	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	Patrice Collazo	3	Adrian Olver	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	Rob Fidler	4	Garrick Morgan (Capt.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ed Pearce	5	Steve White-Cooper	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adam Eustace	6	Roy Winter	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	Andy Hazell	7	Tu Tamarua	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jake Boer	8	Tony Diprose	<input type="checkbox"/>

[replacements]

<input type="checkbox"/>	TBA	16	Bruce Starr	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	TBA	17	Jon Dawson	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	TBA	18	Alex Codling	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	TBA	19	Pat Sanderson	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	TBA	20	Matthew Powell	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	TBA	21	Nick Burrows	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		22	Ryan O'Neill	<input type="checkbox"/>

[teams correct at 26/09/01]

i [denotes international]

c [denotes captain]

[today's officials]

[referee] John Barnard

[touch judges] Martin Fox, Ashley Reay